

The President's Daily Brief

15 December 1970

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Satellite photography has uncovered an apparent new missile site under construction in China. (Page 1)

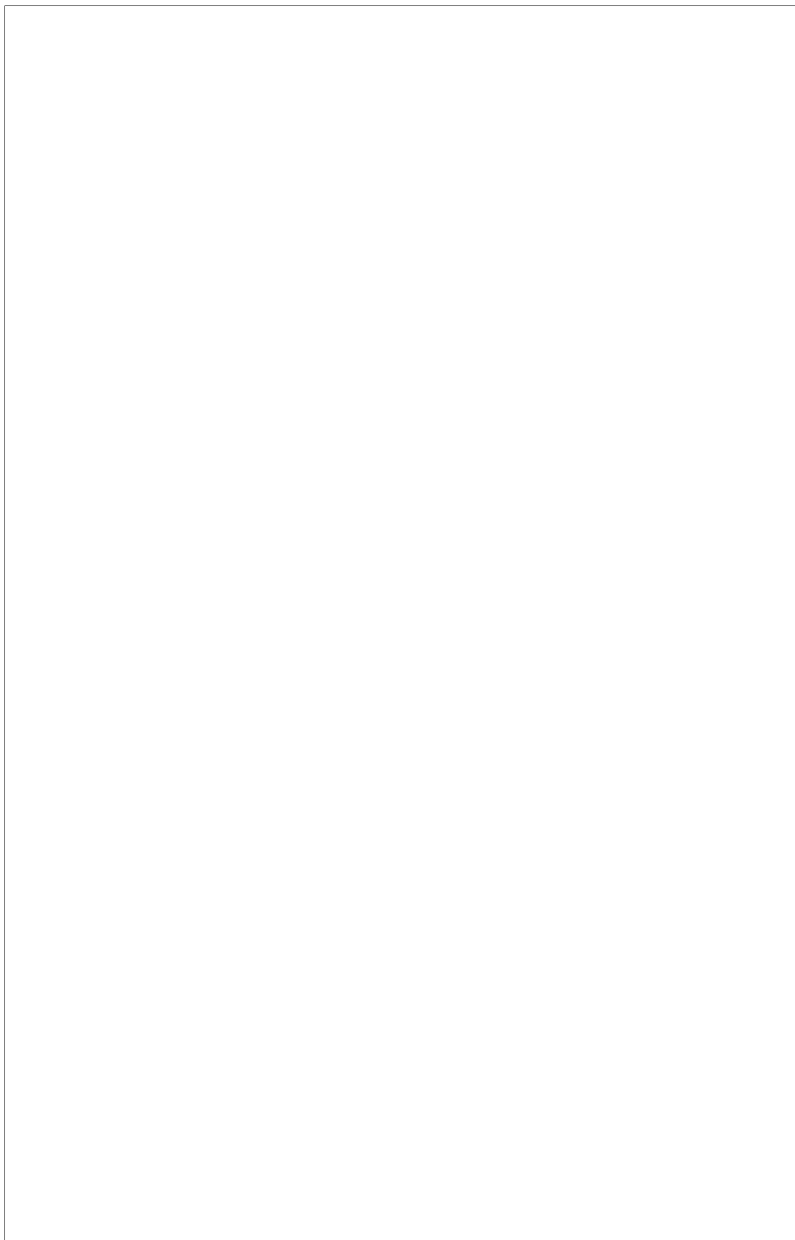
The prolonged fighting in the Kompong Cham area has caused a rift to appear within Cambodia's leadership. (Page 2)



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Thai Communist insurgents are reacting to the government's relocation of former Chinese Nationalist irregulars into insurgent areas. (Page 4)

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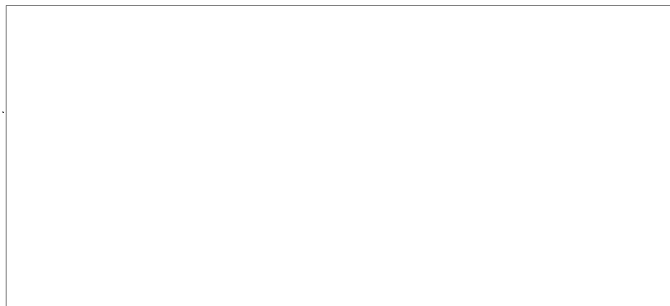
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COMMUNIST CHINA

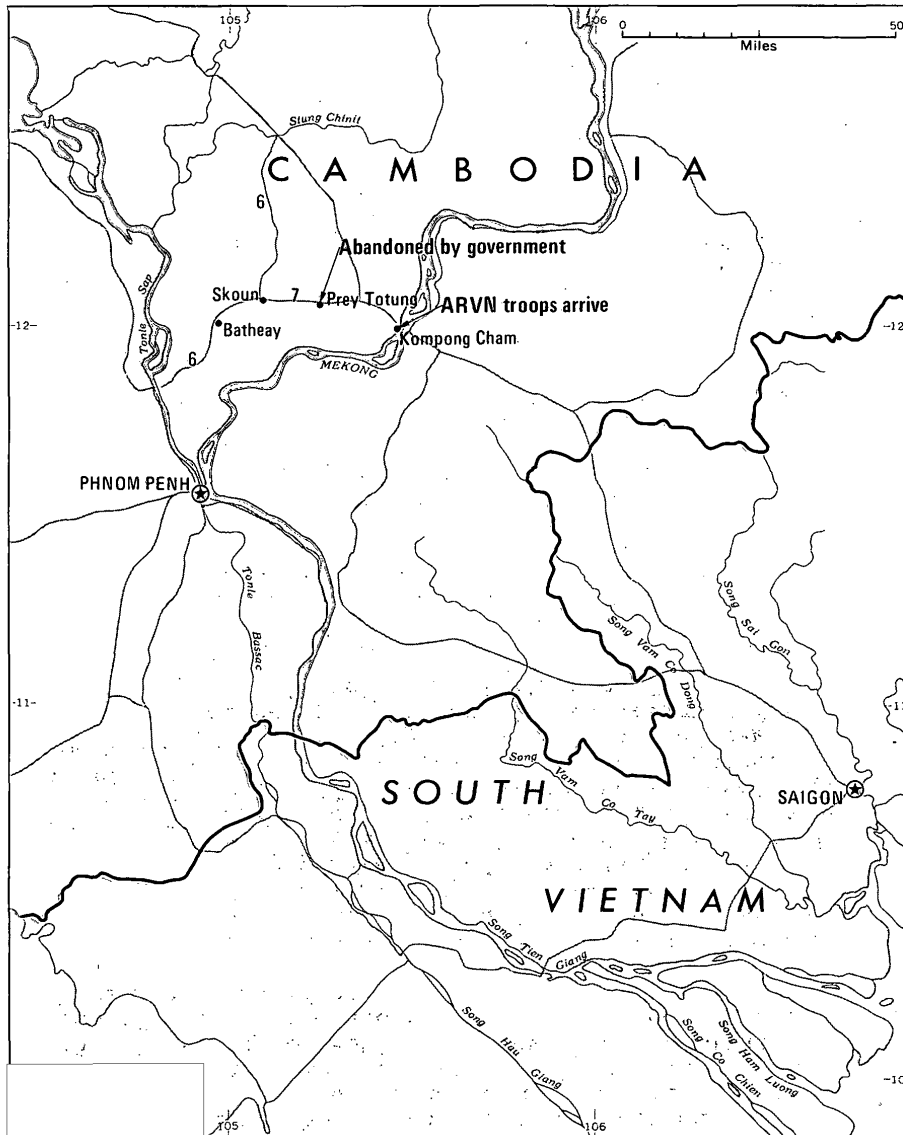
Satellite photography [redacted] shows what we believe is a new strategic missile site under construction in mountainous terrain at Yen-tou, about 150 miles west of Peking. An oval-shaped clearing on top of a ridgeline and three nearby support areas have been identified.

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Cambodia: Current Situation



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CAMBODIA

Government troops have abandoned Prey Totung, the town on Route 7 that was under attack all week-end, and have taken up new positions to the south-west. Supplies have been airdropped to the troops, but a substantial portion is believed to have fallen into enemy hands.

Farther to the west, the situation around the village of Batheay on Route 6 south of Skoun remains fluid. Government forces appear to have the upper hand at present.

[redacted] a rift within Cambodia's leadership has developed over the military situation in Kompong Cham. The governor of Kompong Cham Province, In Tam, tendered his resignation to Lon Nol last week, apparently because of the government's failure to reopen Route 7 or to get supplies into Kompong Cham city.

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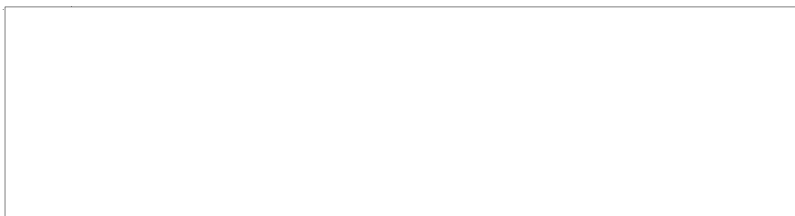
There has been no public reference to In Tam's resignation, presumably because Lon Nol is sitting on it in hopes that Tam will reconsider. Tam is one of Cambodia's top political leaders; his departure could cause considerable embarrassment since it would mark the first time that an important official has openly challenged the regime's conduct of the war.

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In Tam's protests and his desire to resign seem to have been important factors in Lon Nol's appeal to Saigon for troops to help open Route 7. The arrival of South Vietnamese forces in Kompong Cham yesterday could persuade In Tam to change his mind.

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TURKEY



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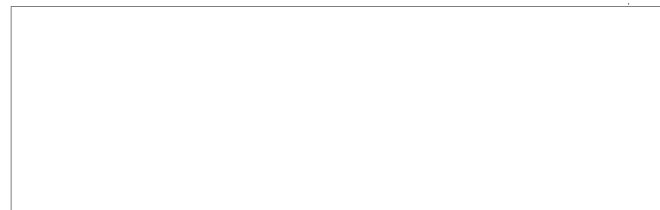
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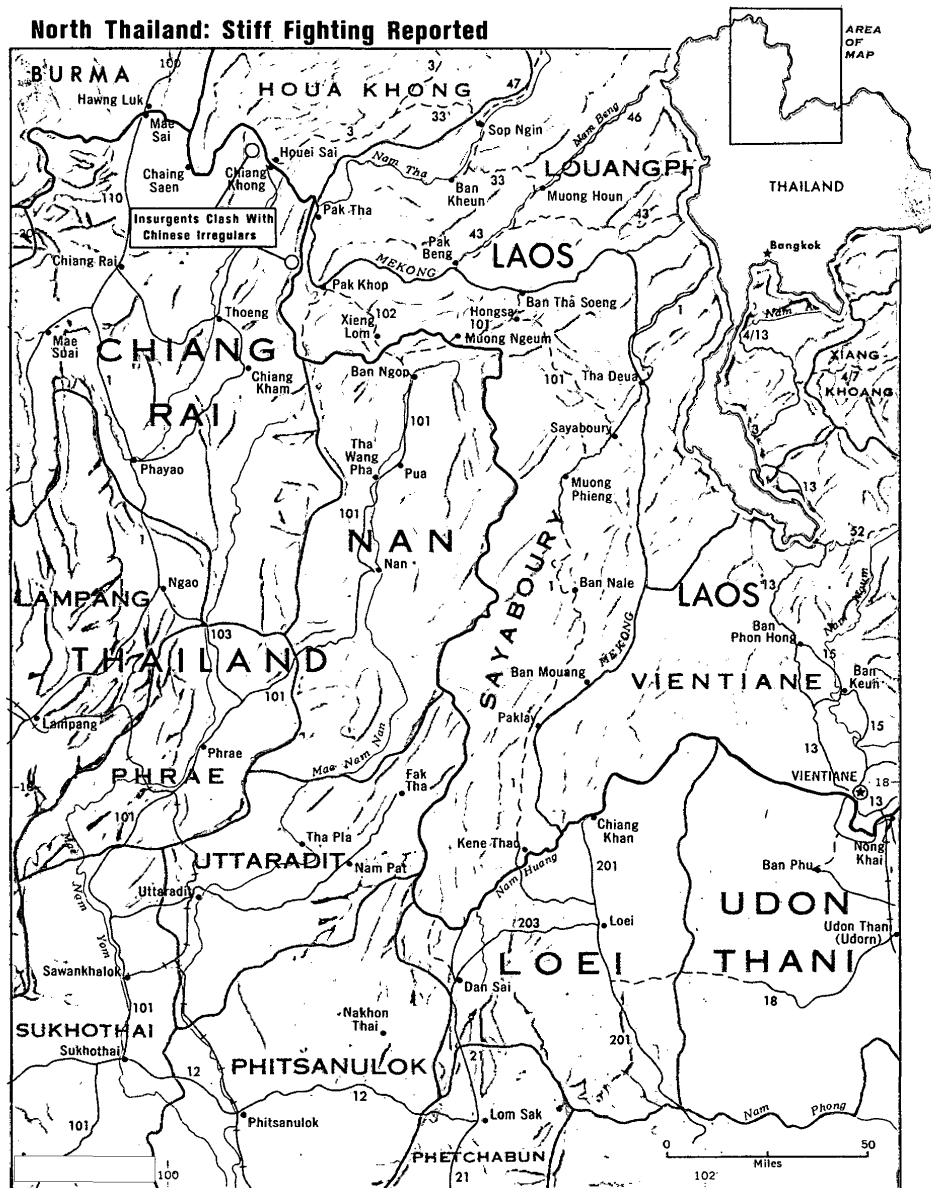


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North Thailand: Stiff Fighting Reported

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THAILAND

Communist insurgents along the Thai-Lao border in northern Chiang Rai Province have reacted strongly to Bangkok's recent movement of more than 700 former Chinese Nationalist irregulars into their operating territory. Bangkok press reports claim that eight Chinese have been killed and 28 wounded since the deployment began several days ago.

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The Chinese irregulars are remnants of forces driven from China by the Communists about 20 years ago. Bangkok's decision to move the Chinese from the Burmese border region to the insurgency area is part of a long-standing effort to impose tighter control on the irregulars and to use their experience to help the Thais in their efforts against the insurgents.

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NOTES

Jordan: The Arab truce committee has succeeded in negotiating some additional measures designed to strengthen implementation of the cease-fire. They are aimed at restraining the fedayeen militia and the Jordanian Popular Resistance, two auxiliary organizations which have been notoriously irresponsible and have frequently broken the cease-fire. The new measures seek to force these groups to spread their forces more thinly and to put their weapons into supervised caches.

USSR: The Soviet Venus probe, launched in August, entered the planet's atmosphere early this morning, but the results of its attempt at a soft landing are not yet clear. We believe the probe was designed structurally to improve prospects for withstanding the extremes of pressure and temperatures that disabled the last three probes during descent through the planet's atmosphere.

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